



United States Mission to the OSCE

Joint Statement by the United States, Canada, France and the United Kingdom on the UN Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 19, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have the honor to make this statement on behalf of the United States, Canada, France and the United Kingdom.

All States Parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) have been invited to attend a conference at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during the week of 4 July 2005 to consider and adopt amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM).

The conference will be the culmination of nearly 6 years of deliberations under the auspices of the IAEA about amending the CPPNM.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, there has been international consensus that the CPPNM should be amended and strengthened. As one of the universal instruments currently in force for preventing and suppressing international terrorism, an amended CPPNM will contribute significantly to the fight against nuclear terrorism.

If the amendments under consideration are adopted, the international regime for the physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities used for peaceful purposes will be significantly strengthened.

The physical protection provisions of the CPPNM as it now stands cover the protection of nuclear material used for peaceful purposes only during international nuclear transport and storage incidental to such transport.

The proposed amendments to the CPPNM would extend the physical protection obligations to cover nuclear material used for peaceful purposes during domestic, use, storage and transport, and to provide protection from sabotage of nuclear material and nuclear facilities used for peaceful purposes.

The proposed amendments also provide for strengthened cooperation among States Parties on physical protection matters and add new offenses to the existing criminal regime, including offenses of sabotage and smuggling.

At the diplomatic conference, a two-thirds majority of all States Parties will be required to adopt the amendments. The participation of all States Parties is the best way to ensure a successful outcome of the July conference.

We urge all States to attend and to fully support adoption of an amended Convention.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.